From Greenlands Icy Mountains

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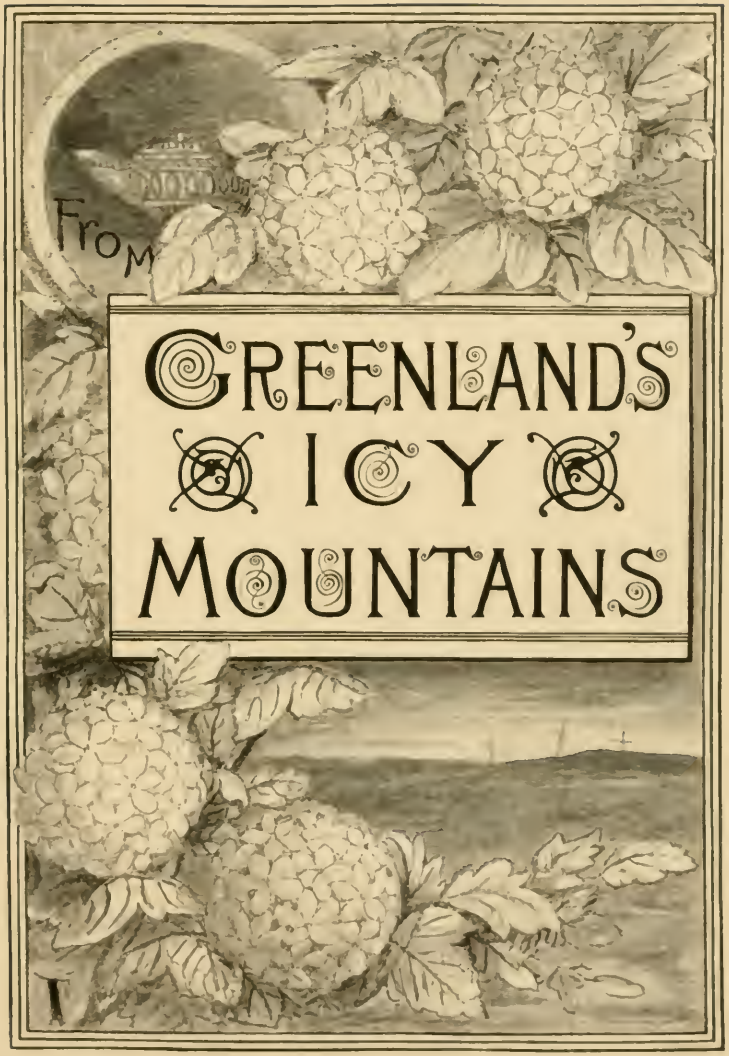
FROM
GREENLAND'S
ICY
MOUNTAINS

From Greenland's Icy Mountains

BY

BISHOP HEBER

With Illustrations

FROM DESIGNS BY

THOMAS GUILFOYE AND EDMUND H. GARRETT

BOSTON
LEE AND SHEPARD, PUBLISHERS
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CHARLES T. DILLINGHAM
1885

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From Greenland's Icy Mountains.

"From Greenland's Icy Mountains"

is the one universal Missionary Hymn sung the whole world over, in every language whose accents have voiced the religion of Jesus, and in every clime where there are Christian hearts to respond to the marching orders of the Master. No missionary assemblage has ever quite come up to the full measure of the gospel spirit without the climax of the grand old Missionary Hymn.

REGINALD HEBER

was born April 21, 1783, at Malpas, in Cheshire, Eng., and entered Brasenose College, Oxford, at the age of seventeen. His pen was ever a facile one; and during his college-course he distinguished himself greatly, in his second year obtaining a university prize for a copy of Latin hexameters, and again, in the following year, by his English prize poem, "Palestine." After his return, in 1809, from an extended Continental tour, he was presented to the family living of Hodnet, where he thoroughly devoted himself to the duties of a parochial priest. Soon after his settlement at Hodnet, he married the daughter of the Rev. W. Shipley, dean of Asaphs.

Having been elected bishop of Calcutta, he sailed June 16, 1823, for the East Indies. He enjoyed this honor less than three years. On the 2d of April, 1826, at Trichinopoli, whither he had gone in the discharge of his episcopal duties, he was seized, while bathing, with an apoplectic-fit, which

terminated in his decease. He is best and widest known by his Missionary Hymn. It was while he was enjoying the living at Hodnet, when he was but thirty-five years of age, that he immortalized himself.

Being on a visit to his father-in-law, Dr. Shipley, one Saturday afternoon in 1818, while in conversation with several friends, the dean suddenly turned, and asked Heber if he would write a missionary hymn for his church to sing the next morning, as he intended to preach a discourse upon missions. Heber at once withdrew to a table in one corner of the room, and, while the friends were engaged in animated conversation, wrote the first three stanzas of the now immortal hymn. Rising from his corner, he read these verses to the company. "That will do," said the dean. Heber, however, thought it incomplete, and at once added the sublime fourth stanza. Little did those gentlemen in that rectory-parlor know that amid the buzz of their conversation was born a mighty power for the spread of the gospel the wide world over.

The hymn was printed that evening, and was sung the next morning in the church at Wrexham; and since that blessed Sabbath its notes have been wafted in one unbroken wave around the world.

From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand,
Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand,
From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error's chain.

What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle;
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile;
In vain with lavish kindness
The gifts of God are strown;
The heathen in his blindness
Bows down to wood and stone.

Can we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Can we to man benighted
The lamp of life deny?
Salvation! O salvation!
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till earth's remotest nation
Has learned Messiah's name.

Waft, waft, ye winds, his story,
And you, ye waters, roll,
Till like a sea of glory
It spreads from pole to pole;
Till o'er our ransomed nature
The Lamb for sinners slain,
Redeemer, King, Creator,
In bliss returns to reign.

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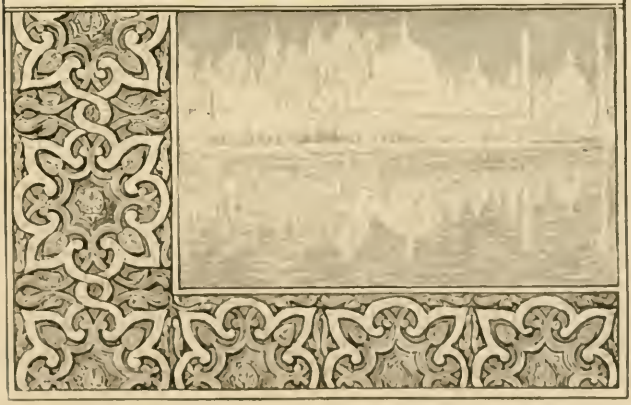

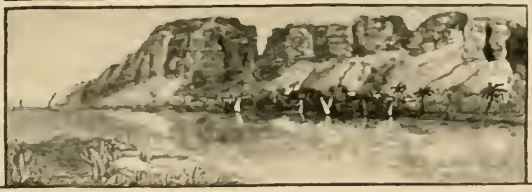

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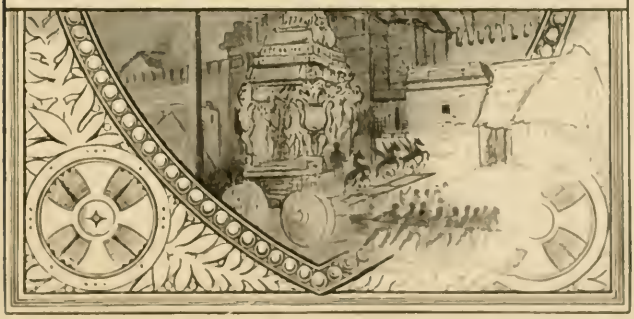

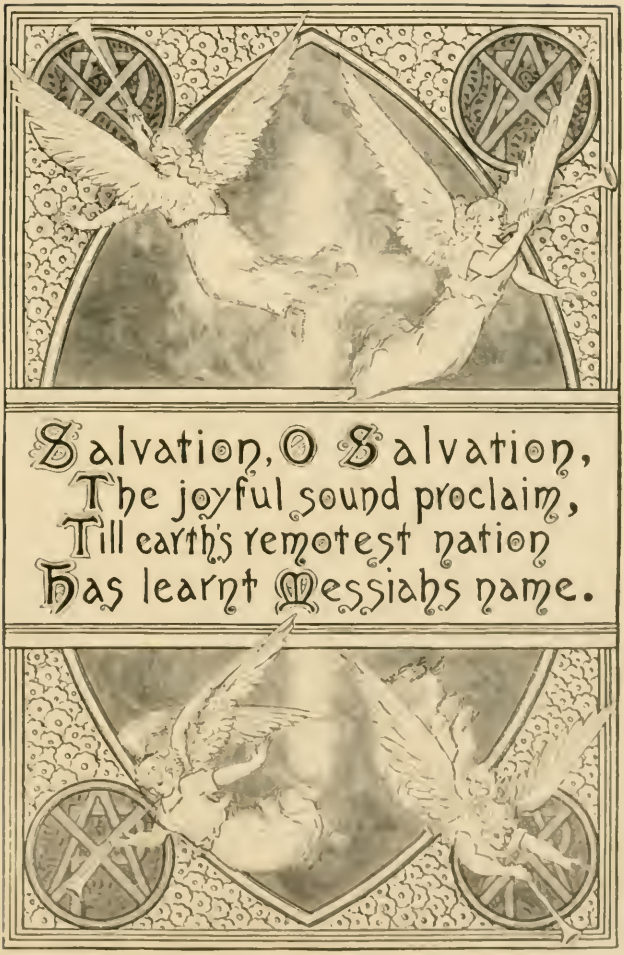
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